

## 4. Developing Objectives and Actions to Address Each Trend and Issue

An objective was developed for each trend and issue to provide a benchmark for future efforts. The objectives are specific to the trends and issues, yet broad enough to capture the variety of interdisciplinary actions needed to meet the objective. The objectives were drawn from the preferred options identified through the *Developing Options* survey. Respondents provided comment on these objectives and also provided their opinions on possible actions to address the objectives and which kind of organizations (government agencies, NGO's, industry, university, etc.) should address the proposed action. **Over 200 individuals and organizations participated in this stage.**

## 5. Statewide Forest Plan

The plan includes a common vision for Wisconsin's forests based on five goals and ten principles for statewide sustainable forestry, a description of fifty-two trends and issues, and objectives to address each trend and issue. Each trend and issue write-up contains a summary discussion of the relevant ecological, economic, and social implications, explores relationships among them, and provides a strategic objective. The final plan, published electronically, also includes the possible actions submitted during the final stage of comments. While not fully vetted by public review, these possible actions are included in the electronically published version of the plan to provide this information as a springboard for action in the development of the implementation plan. The opinion about who should implement the actions also shows the breadth, depth, diversity, and scale of public and private efforts across the mosaic of forest types and various ownerships, interests, and geographical settings. The plan also describes frameworks to measure forest sustainability using commonly accepted sets of criteria and indicators.

### STATEWIDE FOREST PLAN PUBLISHED ON-LINE

Throughout the three-year planning process, there was a healthy, ongoing tension about how to organize the trends and issues. When they were organized by the common themes of the ecological, social, and economic pillars of sustainability, participants in the planning process often became preoccupied with critiquing whether a given trend or issue was in the right category, or that it should be in more than one category. When asked to link the trends and issues with one or more of the goals of the plan, a core group of forestry leaders provided a wide range of responses. When, for the final phase of review, the trends and issues discussions were simply listed without any organizational framework, feedback was resounding that the write-ups must be grouped in some way to facilitate navigation through the voluminous information. From these experiences, it became evident that different people organize this type of information in different ways, and that to commit to any one organizing principle is to limit the usefulness of the information for those who would organize it in a different way. A promising approach is to publish the plan on-line (electronically) to allow all users to organize information in the way that is most meaningful to them, with each trend and issue (and associated objective) linked to multiple goals of the plan, so that trends and issues can be grouped by goals of interest. The document may also be searched by key word, allowing a user to group all

trends/issues involving, for example, "urban forestry," "fire," "aspen," or "invasive species." Through this approach, the information in the plan becomes more accessible to more users.

Further, electronic publishing allows the plan to be a dynamic and living document. While periodic updates to the assessment, planning, and implementation plans for sustainable forestry are long-standing traditions, using electronic documents creates the potential for a more dynamic approach, in which emerging trends and issues can be incorporated into assessment, planning, and action in a more timely way. The plan and associated information can be found on the Wisconsin DNR Forestry Web site [www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/look/assessment/](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/look/assessment/)

## NEXT STEPS

The Statewide Forest Plan provides a unified vision and framework of common goals and objectives to move toward a desired future condition of sustainable forestry in the state. The plan also includes possible actions, or strategies, suggested by publics and partners, to achieve the objectives and begin implementation of the plan. The continued involvement of the public will be important as we move into this crucial implementation phase. Our success will depend on the ability to bring together those who are in a position to identify and implement actions in order to gather information, share existing strategies, and identify new strategies for pursuing each objective while considering ecological, economic, and social implications.

## Develop and Pursue Actions to Accomplish Each Objective

Actions are current and future initiatives to help meet each of the objectives. Possible actions, which were identified by reviewers during the final phase of plan review, are provided in the electronic version of the plan, as examples to assist in the future development of an action plan. If forest resources are to be sustained, actions must be identified, developed, and implemented. These actions can and should be worked on by those interested and affected by the issues.

## Action Tools

A combination of traditional and innovative tools such as policy and management, research and monitoring, assessment and planning, and education and outreach, will be needed to assist in the implementation of the Statewide Forest Plan. The success of the plan up to this point has been dependent upon the input and investment of individuals and groups from across Wisconsin who have an interest in the future of our forests and forest resources. The implementation of the plan, as well as the development of the tools will provide shared benefits to all current and future Wisconsinites.

## November 2004 Governor's Conference on Forestry

In November of 2004, a Governor's Conference on Forestry will bring together citizens, businesses, interest groups, and agencies to identify actions and action tools that can help meet the fifty-two objectives outlined in the plan. The conference will serve as a forum for jointly developing actions with those who have an interest and can influence the future of forestry in Wisconsin, including local, state and

federal agencies, Native American tribes, universities, professional associations, conservation groups, forest-based industries, environmental groups, and forest landowners. Sustainability is a common goal for many public and private interests, and collective efforts such as this conference will be needed to mobilize the skills, capacity, and resources to achieve sustainable forestry.

To bring the fifty-two trends and issues identified in the Statewide Forest Plan into a conceptual framework that would facilitate bringing interested groups of leaders together at the conference, seven themes were described, which collectively include most of the trends and issues from the plan. Key individuals and organizations will champion the development of actions needed to address the trends and issues associated with each of the seven themes.

#### CONFERENCE THEMES:

- Conserving Wisconsin's Biological Diversity
- Minimizing the threat of invasive species to Wisconsin's Forests
- Enhancing Assistance to Wisconsin's Private Forest Landowners
- Managing the Impacts of Changes in Wisconsin's Land Use and Forest Ownership
- Maintaining Wisconsin's Forest Based Economy Enhancing Wisconsin's Urban Forests Minimizing
- Recreational Use Conflicts in Wisconsin's Forests

## MEASURING FOREST SUSTAINABILITY: CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

Are Wisconsin's forests sustainable? Since the Wisconsin Statewide Forest Plan is guided by the premise that a balance of the social, economic, and ecological values of forests is essential to the state and its citizens, the answer to this question is fundamental to measuring the success of the plan.



A number of methods have been developed to measure forest sustainability. Most notable is the framework of Criteria and Indicators for Forest Sustainability developed as part of the Montreal Process. In 1993, representatives from twelve countries—including the United States—joined together in Montreal, Canada, to discuss how sustainable forestry might be defined and measured in terms of outcomes. The product of that meeting is referred to as the Montreal Process, a

framework of Criteria and Indicators for tracking progress in forest sustainability.

The Criteria and Indicators for Forest Sustainability are organized around 7 overarching criterion by which sustainable forestry is measured (see Appendix):

1. Conservation of Biological Diversity
2. Maintenance of Productive Capacity of Forest Ecosystems
3. Maintenance of Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality
4. Conservation of Soil and Water Resources
5. Maintenance of Forest Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles
6. Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Multiple Socioeconomic Benefits to Meet the Needs of Society
7. Legal, Institutional and Economic Framework for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Management.

Within each criterion, several indicators to address the particular criterion are identified. Often multiple variables, or metrics, can be used to evaluate each indicator. Progress in sustainability is determined by evaluating the sum of the indicators for each criterion.

Criteria and Indicators are included in this plan as an example of one tool to measure forest sustainability. Other organizations and forest certification systems have adapted the Criteria and Indicators to their particular needs. The 2000 Wisconsin Forest Assessment does not use Criteria and Indicators directly, but does mention the potential use for future assessments. The Criteria and Indicators may similarly serve us as a useful resource as we begin developing strategies for implementing the plan and ensuring long-term forest sustainability in Wisconsin. The Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators as described in the appendix and the on-line technical resources provide a cross-walk between the indicators and the trends and issues.